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TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [MOPS](#) [EWWT](#) [PBTS](#) [ZR](#) [SO](#) [XA](#)  
SUBJECT: ACTION REQUEST: NATO COUNTER-PIRACY: FISH OR CUT  
BAIT TIME

REF: A. BRUSSELS 751  
[1](#)B. USNATO 202

Classified By: Ambassador Ivo Daalder. Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C/NF) This is an Action Request. See para 14.

[1](#)2. (C/NF) SUMMARY: At the strong urging of the United States, NATO is moving forward with planning for a long-term counter-piracy operation. At the same time, Allies--including the U.S.--have been tepid in their willingness to actually contribute to the mission. NATO will host a Force Generation conference on June 10. If the U.S. and its Allies are unwilling to announce contributions at this conference, the NATO operation will be either significantly scaled-back, delayed, or canceled. Because U.S. policy makers have advocated this operation, we strongly recommend that the U.S. pledge a significant contribution at the conference to demonstrate U.S. leadership. We also recommend demarching Allies in capitals, urging them to contribute as well. We believe that the U.S. should also consider proposing moving Combined Task Force 151 under a NATO flag, as well as considering what contributions the U.S. could make to a NATO maritime capacity building effort. The failure of this mission would have strategic implications beyond the counter-piracy mission, corroding NATO's role as the key trans-Atlantic link on security issues. END SUMMARY

#### Progress on a NATO Counter-piracy Mission

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[1](#)3. (C/NF) At the strong urging of the United States, NATO has been working hard to develop a robust and long-term counter-piracy mission. The Military Committee has recently endorsed the Concept of Operations (ConOps) for such a mission, naming it Operation Ocean Shield. We expect this to be raised with Defense Ministers on June 11.

But Lack of Forces Threatens it...

14. (C/NF) NATO Allies, however, have not yet been forthcoming in pledging forces for this mission. Many of our European Allies have claimed that because they are already participating in the EU's Atalanta counter-piracy mission, they will be unable to contribute to a NATO mission (ref A). A May 22 SHAPE conference designed to get a sense of what Allies might be willing to contribute was described as disappointing, leading the Chairman of the Military Committee to argue that if the situation did not change the planned NATO mission would likely either have to be significantly scaled back, delayed, or canceled.

Is the U.S. Serious About a NATO Mission?

15. (C/NF) While it would be tempting to blame this lack of interest entirely on our European Allies, the U.S. has also been unwilling to fully commit to participation in a NATO operation. At the May 22 meeting, the U.S. was only prepared to say that it was "considering" moving a ship from the Standing NATO Maritime Group to the NATO counter-piracy mission, as well as possibly providing some logistics and intelligence support.

16. (C/NF) This lack of commitment conflicts with the Administration's strong statements of support for a NATO mission. In the run-up to the NATO Summit in April, for example, the Washington interagency instructed this Mission

to fight for communique language in support of a long-term NATO role in counter-piracy: a battle we won. A May 13 press release by the Department said that the U.S. "actively" supported the expansion of NATO counter-piracy efforts; Acting Assistant Secretary Mull used similar language when testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on April 30.

Fish or Cut Bait Time

17. (C/NF) On June 10, SHAPE will host a formal force generation conference. If this conference fails to generate needed contributions, the proposed NATO mission will likely be dead before it has even begun.

18. (C/NF) At the June 3 North Atlantic Council meeting, Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer stressed that the failure of NATO to act on this matter only two months after NATO Heads of State and Government--including President Obama--had agreed to do so would be unthinkable. He strongly rebuked those Allies who had been arguing that their contributions to the EU mission would prevent them from also contributing to a NATO mission, pointedly telling PermReps to look at Alliance inventories because there are significantly more ships in Allied navies than the few ships that are taking part in Atalanta.

19. (C/NF) For similar reasons, if the United States--as one of the main advocates of a NATO counter-piracy role--is unable or unwilling to contribute to a NATO mission, the missi/Q"Q+QQQ\$?QNZthe end match our words.

Getting Things Back on Track

110. (C/NF) Assuming the United States does want to see a robust NATO role in counter-piracy, we believe that the following minimum steps will need to be taken:

-- the United States will need to make a firm pledge of U.S. forces at the June 10 Force Generation conference. At a minimum, this will need to include the forces the U.S. said it was considering contributing at the May 22 conference (i.e. moving its vessel from the Standing NATO Maritime Group, as well as contributions of certain logistics support

-- including oilers). We should also include other contributions we could make. The Secretary General has noted the need, for example, for Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

-- if the U.S. is willing to contribute, it should demarche Allies in capitals prior to the June 10 Force Generation conference, urging them to also make commitments at the conference. Following the Secretary General's lead, we should make clear that the U.S. does not accept the argument that their contributions to an EU operation prevents them from also contributing to a NATO operation. We should remind them that they are the ones who have argued that the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) would not be undertaken in a manner that was competitive with NATO and that it was upon that basis that we supported the development of ESDP.

#### A Bolder Proposal: Some Recommendations

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¶11. (C/NF) We also believe that the United States should

consider proposing the movement of Combined Task Force 151 into the NATO Mission. Of the five nations currently contributing to CTF 151, three (the U.S., UK, and Turkey) are NATO Allies. The other two (South Korea and Singapore) are already working with NATO in other areas, particularly Afghanistan. South Korea, for example, is defined as one of NATO's Partners Across the Globe, and NATO has developed a Tailored Cooperation Package with it. Other NATO partners, such as Russia and Japan, are operating independently in the region, but may be willing to contribute to a NATO operation.

Russia, in particular, has already expressed an interest in working with NATO on this issue and may well raise the possibility at the June 27 NATO-Russia Foreign Ministerial. Using TF 151 as the core of a NATO counter-piracy mission, might therefore have a knock-on effect of aiding counter-piracy coordination, putting more and more ships under a NATO flag and making use of the interoperability which has been developed between NATO and NATO partner forces.

¶12. (C/NF) An important part of the NATO Summit decision on counter-piracy was that NATO would examine the issue of maritime capacity building in the region. In support of this decision, we would recommend that Washington consider what contributions the U.S. could make to NATO maritime capacity building--through AFRICOM, for example.

#### Comment

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¶13. (C/NF) If the Force Generation conference fails, it is likely that the NATO mission will, as well. While that would be bad enough, this will have even greater strategic consequences. Certain EU Allies will be emboldened to further place EU commitments ahead of their NATO commitments, corroding NATO's role as the key trans-Atlantic link and weakening U.S. influence in Europe.

#### Action Request

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¶14. (C/NF) We request that Washington take the steps identified in para 10 above, providing a robust U.S. commitment at the June 10 Force Generation conference and demarching Allied capitals to the same. Moreover, we ask that Washington also seriously consider our proposals in paras 11 and 12.

DAALDER